

OPC Bulletin

'Disturbed By the Wave Of Violence'

Colombia's president replies to OPC protest over slayings, kidnap

Responding to a letter from Norman Schorr, chairman of the OPC Freedom of the Press Committee, protesting against the "wave of violence directed against the press in Colombia," President Cesar Gaviria Trujillo personally wrote in reply, saying that his "government and authorities are doing all that is in their hands to put an end to this violence."

The letter from Schorr, which was sent by FAX to President Gaviria, called for investigations into the slayings of a radio reporter and a newspaper publisher, and the kidnapping of the publisher of another daily.

Here is President Gaviria's response:

Dear Mr. Schorr:

I received your letter dated May 14, by which the Overseas Press Club of America expressed its concern for the murder of Colombian journalist Carlos Lajud Catalán and publisher Eustorgio Colmenares Baptista and the kidnapping of Colombian publisher Jaime Ardila Casamitjana.

As you well know, our deep democratic tradition has regarded the press as one of the most important bases upon

The OPC plugs into the communications mainstream...

A New FAX Comes to Life



"We have come into the 20th Century. No more smoke signals." —So reads the first FAX sent from club manager Mary Novick, shown here with Maureen Flanagan, director of media relations for NYNEX, and OPC member Peter T. Goodale, the corporate director of external communications for NYNEX. When he joined the club last year, Goodale had a conversation with vice president Bill Holstein, and asked what he could do for the club in the area of telecommunications. The result: a new FAX machine donated by NYNEX. "NYNEX is expanding internationally, and the kind of quality news coverage offered by the OPC members is increasingly important to us," said Goodale. "It's the reason for our support to the club."

The new FAX number for the OPC is (212) 983-4692.

which our political system relies. In accordance to this tradition, the freedom of press is included in our Constitution and laws as a fundamental right.

Therefore, these cases and all of those related to violence and harass-

ment directed at journalists in my country have disturbed not only the Colombian press and government but the people, and are being investigated by the authorities since the same

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Rites Held in Nairobi & Berlin For Slain Journalists

BY GERRY MCGUIRE

Services were held late last month in Nairobi and Berlin for three Reuters employees and an AP man killed by a mob of Somalis following a United Nations helicopter raid July 12. The raid took place on compounds run by the fugitive Somali warlord General Mohammed Farah Aidid.

The bodies of two of the Reuters employees, Hosea D. Maina, 38, a photographer, and Anthony Macharia, 21, a television sound technician, were recovered some days after the incident. Also slain were a British American, Dan Eldon, 22, who was a Reuters photographer, and Hansi Krauss, 30, an AP photographer based in Berlin.

The incident occurred when about 10 journalists were taken to the scene of the attack to look at the damage. More than 100 Somalis armed with guns and knives were reported to have

shot and mobbed the five cars in which the journalists were riding. Eldon appeared to have been beaten with stones and rifle butts.

A Reuters TV cameraman, Mohamed Shaffi, was shot and beaten, but survived to describe the attack.

Bob Crooke of Reuters America Division said: "We offer a special tribute and are in particular debt in a difficult and dangerous reporting year to our colleagues who have been killed or suffered wounds in carrying out their mission to expose news events in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia to the outside world."

Vin Alabiso, the executive photo editor of the Associated Press, said of all four: "We mourn their loss and will greatly miss Hansi's important work for AP." Krauss was the 16th AP reporter or photographer to die in the line of duty since 1938. He joined the AP in Berlin as the Wall

was being torn down. "We weep again for one of our own," Lou Boccardi, president of the AP, said in New York.

"The deaths of these brave men all too forcefully illustrates the extent to which the foreign reporter faces danger, even in times when the globe is in a period of relative stability," said Larry Smith, president of the Overseas Press Club. "It is all too easy to say none of them should have died, that somebody erred, but this incident reminds us, as did the shooting death of ABC's David Kaplan in Sarajevo just a year ago, how the foreign correspondent walks in the shadow of the gun and sometimes pays with his or her life to bring the news to the American public and around the world. We salute their courage and honor their memory. The Overseas Press Club offers its deepest condolences to their families and colleagues."

Gaviria letter...

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moment the crimes were perpetrated.

Regarding the investigation of Carlos Lajud Catalán's murder, the competent authorities in Barranquilla have already syndicated (sic) for homicide with terrorist purposes three men who answer to the names of Eduardo Antonio Campo Carvajal, Oscar Eliécer Pena Navarro and Johnny Alberto Merino Erazo. They are now under preventive detention and the investigation is in its instructive phase until all necessary proofs are practiced.

Unfortunately, the investigations for the Eustorgio Colmenares Baptista murder have not been as successful. On March 17, the guerrilla movement National Liberation Army (ELN), very

active in Cúcuta, the city where Mr. Colmenares was assassinated, claimed responsibility for this crime. In order to advance the investigation, the competent authorities in Cúcuta created a special investigative unit, which has already received many testimonies and practiced technical proofs.

Jaime Ardila Casamitjana was kidnapped in Valledupar on April 10 and released by the kidnapers on May 17. Pedro Alfonso González Redondo has been accused in a procedure by the competent authorities in Valledupar and is now under preventive detention.

As you may see, the judicial authorities of Colombia are investigating these crimes in order to bring the material and intellectual perpetrators to justice. Furthermore, the Colombian government has taken all the measures that it may

take, according to our Constitution and laws, to end the abuse and intimidation directed at journalists in my country.

As I thank you for your concern for the safety of journalists and the freedom of the press of the world, and particularly in Colombia, I would like to take this opportunity to express to you that we, the government and the people of Colombia, are most disturbed by the wave of violence, not only against journalists but against all citizens in my country, and that the Colombian government and authorities are doing all that is in their hands to put an end to this violence.

Sincerely,
Casar Gaviria Trujillo
President of the Republic of Colombia
Santafé de Bogotá, D.C.

TOKYO J-CLUB ANNOUNCES NEW OFFICERS

The Foreign Correspondents Club in Tokyo and Hong Kong elected new officers to one-year terms this summer.

Lewis Simons of Knight-Ridder Newspapers is the new president. Other new officers are: Roger Schreffler, Crane Communications, and Pamela Burton, Japan Broadcasting Corp., vice presidents; Henry Scott-Stokes, New York Times Fax Service, treasurer; Nobuko Hara, *Journal of Commerce*, secretary; and directors Takashi Oka, *Time Japan*; Robert Neff, *Business Week*; Francois Vermeulen, La Suisse; and Shoto Ushio, Toyo Kezai.

In Hong Kong, freelancer Philip Bowring, the former editor of the *Far Eastern Review*, a Dow Jones weekly magazine, was elected president of that city-colony's Foreign Correspondents Club. New vice presidents are Carl Goldstein, *Far Eastern Economic*

Review, and Stuart Wolfendale, freelancer. Correspondent governors are Paul Bayfield, Asia Pacific Directories; Daniela Deane, *Washington Post*; Simon Holberton, *Financial Times*; Brian Jeffries, *Asia-Pacific Space Report*; V.G. Kulkarni, *Far Eastern Economic Review*; Philippe Le Corre, Radio France International; Paul Mooney, *Far Eastern Economic Review*; and Hubert Van Es, freelance.

OPCER HAD A HAND IN WATERGATE

In a June 17 speech in the U.S. House of Representatives, Don Edwards, the Democratic Congressman from California, said that Greek journalist Elias P. Demetracopoulos, an OPC member, played a role in Watergate disclosures. The Washington-based journalist provided the Democratic National Committee with information contending that the Greek military government made illegal payments to Richard

Nixon's campaign fund, Edwards said. Edwards described Demetracopoulos as a "central figure in the Greek connection theory [of Watergate]." This theory, that campaign contributions from the Greek military dictatorship caused anxiety in the Nixon administration, is set forth in the book "The Wars of Watergate" by Stanley I. Kutler, a professor of history and law and the University of Wisconsin.

CENTER BUILT FOR THE 1ST AMENDMENT

The Keller Center for the Study of the First Amendment has been founded at the University of Colorado in Boulder through a donation from LeRoy Keller, former international vice president of UPI.

Keller said he got the idea for the center after reading a book on the First Amendment. Discussions with relatives and friends led the newsman to conclude that many people are unaware of the amendment's importance as a

basic right.

The center will sponsor speaking engagements and a lecture series by scholars, journalists and lawyers. Classes and essay competitions are planned to help generate First Amendment issues and a visiting scholars program.

Keller, 87, who lives in Bronxville, N.Y., joined UPI in 1929, the year he graduated from Colorado, and worked for the wire service until 1971, when he became a newspaper consultant and broker.

OBITUARIES

Margery Q. Bissell, a long-standing OPC member, died recently. Bissell, who worked for the Associated Press and later as a freelance photographer, had been a member of the club since 1956.

Gloria Zukerman, a former member of the OPC board of governors, died recently. She was 62.

Zukerman, a member of the club since 1974, worked for El Al Israel Airlines, where she developed the "Visit USA" program.

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OPC Panelist Challenges Report in *Bulletin*

As'ad Abukhalil, a scholar at the Middle East Institute in Washington, wrote to say that the Bulletin had misconstrued remarks he made in a May panel on Islamic Fundamentalism. Here is his letter:

I was quite outraged when I read the news item about the panel on Islamic fundamentalism in which I participated (June issue of *OPC Bulletin*). I could not recognize myself from the remarks that you attributed to me. I clearly did not take a strong stand "in defending Islamic fundamentalism," as you erroneously stated. I have in my writings and in press interviews (like in *The New York Times*) strongly condemned Islamic fundamentalism, or fundamentalism of any kind, because I am, in the language of fundamentalists, an unbeliever, a staunch secularist and an ardent feminist. To be sure, I strongly criticize what I call the Western ideology of hostility against Islam, but this is not akin to a defense of fundamentalism. I wonder whether you can perceive somebody to be a critic of both the Western ideology of hostility toward Islam and the ideology of Islamic fundamentalism. I, for one, am a staunch critic of both ideologies.

Similarly, your statement that I "argued that feminist writers and pro-Jewish writers had intentionally misrepresented Islam" is appalling because I simply did *not* say it, nor will I ever associate myself with such an anti-Semitic and misogynist statement. I criticized elements in both Jewish and Christian fundamentalism (and I named them together) which happen to be exclusively against fundamentalism within Islam. I did criticize the Israeli position against Islamic fundamentalism

because I view it to be inconsistent, but this does not imply that I attributed the hostility against Islam to feminist and "pro-Jewish" writers. I have always abhorred those labels: what does it mean to be "pro-Jewish" or "pro-Muslim"? I happen to believe that, in sectarian terms, there is more hostility to Islam among American Christians than among American Jews (and I do not say that because my wife is Jewish). I never consider the religious or ethnic identity of my intellectual opponent relevant to any discussion. And I have on many occasions strongly condemned the anti-Semitic manifestations in Islamic fundamentalism discourse. As far as feminism is concerned, I was criticizing the notion of "colonial feminism," which

does not make me anti-feminist. It was quite distressing to see how somebody could, wittingly or unwittingly, distort my thesis in such a blatant way. I have been called "an enemy of Islam" by Islamic fundamentalists, and they would be startled to know that you called me a defender of fundamentalism. And "colonial fundamentalism" refers to the practice of those colonial officers in the Middle East who used to shed crocodile tears over the plight of Muslim women while they were staunchly against female suffrage in their own home countries. Why can't we debate those issues freely without you or anybody else slandering your opponent with hostile and inaccurate labels?

September Programs:

- A look at international press coverage by the American media is scheduled for **Sept. 22**, during lunch, at the Hyatt Regency. The panel will feature Bernard Gwertzman, foreign editor of *The New York Times*, Henry Muller, editorial director of *Time*, and Ed

Turner, CNN executive vice president. Members will be informed by mail.

- A "Hello Party" for new members is all set for **Thursday, Sept. 30**, 5:30 PM, at The Tudor. Members will be informed by mail.

- Board of Governors and Membership Meeting: **Thursday, Aug. 19**, 5:30 PM, The Tudor.

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